(e) Steps taken to boost export of cigarettes include :—

1. Undertaking trade promotion measures such as aggressive publicity in overseas markets, participation in fairs and exhibitions abroad, trade delegations to importing countries etc.

2. Promoting export oriented units for export of cigarettes.

3. Permitting foreign investment in cigarette industry mainly for export purpose.

4. Expanding the base of quality tobacco.

5. Encouraging manufacturers to establish warehouses in CIS countries for stock and sale of cigarettes.

6. Permitting cigarette manufacturers to import various items with a view to enable them to undertake product development.

Pulse Scandal

3642. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any inquiry has been made into the alleged "Rs. 100 crore pulse scandal" involving a shady export licences conspiracy between NAFED and other officials as reported in the Sunday Mail of December, 19-25, 1993; and

(b) if so, what are the results and findings of the inquiry ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Material is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Ban on the sale of Basmati and non-Basmati rice in the domestic Tariff area

3643. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have banned the sale of both basmati and Non-basmati rice in the domestic tariff area by rice export-oriented units and those allocated in any export zone;

(b) if so, whether it has prohibited the import of basmati, paddy and brown rice by these units; and

(c) if so, to what extent it has helped to maintain the balance in the domestic and export requirements ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c) Sale of rice in Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) is not allowed as there is zero percent Custom Duty on rice and the 100% EOUs which are able to procure all their capital goods on duty-free basis could be placed in a position of unfair advantage relative to other rice mills in the DTA.

Such imports are not considered in the best interest of the image of Indian basmati, nor in the interests of the basmati growers, and are, therefore, not allowed.